

THE NUR AFSEAN

Vol. VII. FRIDAY:—JUNE 12th, 1903. No. 24

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is good sign of progress when our people exhibit a real love of country. It is natural for one to love the land, or the town, that gave him birth, reared his childhood with its beauties and its pleasures, and affords his manhood an honourable sphere for the employment of his talents.

There is, however, much that is called Patriotism, in India to-day that is nothing more than an obstinate adherence to custom. For some of our Hindu neighbours, it is only necessary to convince them that a certain thing or custom was current among their fathers, to secure a most enthusiastic reception of the same. The thing must have been good because their fathers believed, or practiced it. No question is tolerated that would impugn the past. A good illustration of this sort of false, not to say ridiculous, patriotism is the following from the *Anrita Bazar Patrika*, as reported, in the *India Statesman*:

"The self-immolation of Hindu wives on the funeral piles of their deceased husbands (says the *Anrita Bazar Patrika*) has been and is still characterized, by the too thoroughly materialized Westerner, as a striking relic of the barbaric; and many of our go-ahead reformers, too, follow suit. Opposed as we are, on grounds of humanity, to any pressure or violence being put on widows to immolate themselves on the pyres of their husbands, we cannot help feeling something like reverence for the high ideal held up by those angels in human shape, who think life not worth living when the hand of cruel Death removes their husbands, and who would accompany them gladly and willingly out of this vale of tears to the regions high above the skies where there is no separation, no misery, no woe. They alone are Sutties truly so called, who are fit to be ranked with the best of womenkind and regarded as demi-goddesses. Here is a case of conjugal love and attachment which shudders at the thought of separation and snaps its fingers even at the dread monster Death. We are sure the West will fail to find a parallel.

"Dhaipura is a small hamlet in Bikarampur. Here, till recently, lived a man named Sudhanachandra Das Deshpande. He suddenly died the other day of cholera. Immediately before his death, his wife was unwell, but there was nothing fatal in her symptoms. When Sudaya died, she felt it impossible to live on without him, and resolved on self-immolation. She made over her little child to her relatives

and took leave of them all. Then she staggered to the yard, where the body of her husband still lay covered prior to its removal to the cremation ground, smiled a sweet sad smile, and then laid herself beside the body. A few moments later, her eyes closed in that sleep which knows no waking, and her soul flew to join with her lord's."

Now the question arises in the mind of the average unsophisticated "westerner" why should not this admirer show in his own life some of the devotion of this poor, misguided widow, half maddened by grief at the death of her husband and the doom which her patriotic religionists had made it impossible for her to escape except by suicide? Why should he not devote himself upon the funeral pyre of an affectionate wife? Is it a surer sign of the purity of conjugal affection when the wife immolates herself, than that of the sorrowing husband, should he do the same? Why is he alone permitted to console himself by a second marriage? Does the *Anrita Bazar Patrika* not believe that Hindu widows would be possible subjects of a like consolation? Of all the abominable customs of Hindu superstition, none deserves such severe reprobation as does the Sutte. And for this reason it is pitiable to see educated young men endeavouring to condone this evil custom.

The latest critic of Christian Missions is Dr. Josiah Oldfield D. C. L. M. A. C. S. of London, who has ventilated his views in the *Hibbert Journal*. His verdict is adverse. Indeed he declares that Christian Missions have failed.

It seems, according to his own admission, that Dr. Oldfield never once accepted the hospitality of a missionary. He never visited a Native Christian place of worship, nor did he ever attend any of the numerous Christian conferences. All his intercourse was with non-Christians and with those hostile to Christian work in India. Our readers can judge for themselves as to how much value should be attached to such criticisms of Missions. Our reply to all inquiries as to the failure of Missions is "Come and See."

We are presenting to our readers this week, an Appeal which has been made to the Indian Christian churches of the Punjab in the belief that some at least will be led to consider seriously the question of personal responsibility for the Evangelization of India.

Anent this subject the *Makhzan-i-Masikhi* has the following:—

"Recently, in an address to Indian Christians, the speaker urged the young men present to face the question of their life work and often to ask themselves the question, Where can I do the most for the Lord? That should settle the question of one's life work. The question is not, where can I make the most money, or obtain the greatest honour, or have the easiest time, but where am I needed most to advance the interests of the Lord's Kingdom. We are His servants.

Our time, strength, health, education, all are his. We have in mind a brilliant young Christian, who carried off the highest prizes of his college, and who, it is believed by those who knew him, heeded not the voice of the Spirit calling him to devote his life to the service of Christ. He is dead and gone long ago, the last years of his life full of sadness. He died a disappointed man. All we ask our young men in India is to consider this question carefully, alone with God, and the decision thus reached will never be regreted."

AN APPEAL TO THE CHURCHES

OF THE

LAHORE AND LODIANA PRESBYTERIES

Dear Brothers.

You are probably aware that the Punjab Mission (formerly Lodiana Mission), at a special meeting held at Lahore in the second week of April last, considered the needs of its different Stations in reference to the supply of workers. After a very careful and solemn consideration of this question for two days, it was unanimously resolved to appeal for reinforcement, (1) to the Indian Churches connected with the Mission, and (2) to the Churches of America, to which the Mission belongs. The situation which forced the Mission to this decision may be thus briefly described:—

1. There are 8 large districts in British Territory and 6 Native States in connection with our Mission, with a total population of about 9,000,000, consisting of Hindus, Muhammadans, Sikhs and others. About 15 per. of this population are found in cities, and the rest are distributed in 15,000 villages. Our Mission is mainly responsible for the evangelization and conversion of this vast population. Many of them, specially those living in the villages, have not yet heard the Gospel of Christ, and as they are dying at the rate of about 150,000 a year, many will never hear it, unless we make an immediate and strenuous effort to carry it to them.

2. Besides these non-Christian communities, there are 6000 Indian Christians in our Mission territory. Our Mission is also mainly responsible for their pastoral care and supervision. They need careful and constant instruction and building up in Christian faith and life.

3. We might also mention here some of the encouraging circumstances in connection with our work. There is an open door every where. The people are friendly and more than ever before willing to listen to the claims of Christianity, and to consider them. There are also numerous Enquirers every where. Some of them are so far advanced in their respect and admiration for Christ,

as to regard him as one of the best religious teachers in the world, and are trying to live according to his precepts. There are besides within our bounds about 1,250,000 low caste people. They are generally ready to accept the Christian religion. There is a mass movement amongst them towards Christianity. Some of them have already received baptism, and are enrolled as members of the Christian Church, and others are constantly sending messages to our preachers to come over and help them to teach and baptize them. We believe this movement to be of God, and feel it our duty to take advantage of it. If we do not, they will either lapse into their former condition of indifference and irreligion, or be absorbed into the non-Christian systems of this country.

To meet the situation described above,—to discharge our duties to the Christian and non-Christian communities within our field with any degree of satisfaction, and to take full advantage of the opportunities opened out to us in the gracious providence of God, we need large re-inforcement. Our present force is extremely small and meagre. We have now only 40 American Missionaries—20 men and 20 women and 87 Indian agents of all grades for all our work—evangelistic, pastoral, educational, medical and zenana work. It is hardly necessary to point out how insignificant and inadequate this number is for the enormous amount of work before them. We deeply feel our inability, with so small a force, to cope with the situation. We feel at the same time, we must make a forward movement, and with the help of God, push on our work as fast as we can, and we can do so only if the Indian and the American Churches come forward and help us in our emergency. We have already sent our Appeal to the Churches of America, and now present it to you. Our conviction is, the evangelization of India, at the present stage of Missionary work, must be accomplished with the united efforts of both. We therefore also appeal to you for help, and ask you to supply us with 200 additional workers, men and women, imbued with the spirit of Christ and anxious to save souls. If we get this number, we believe our present requirements will be sufficiently met. If it be too large for you to supply in one year, it might be done in four, at the rate of 50 workers a year. We want Pastors, Evangelists, Licentiates, Catechists, Teachers and Zenana workers. We want all sorts and grades of workers. There is room in the Lord's service for the exercise of a diversity of gifts. We appeal to you in the name of Him who died for us—who came to seek and save the lost, and whose last command to the Church—to all His disciples was to "go and preach the gospel to every creature." We appeal also to your patriotic feeling. The people for whom we are pleading are your brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh. Will you not exert yourselves to give them the best gift you yourselves have received. Some of you have honorable and lucrative positions under Government, and others look forward to them. Could you not give them up for Him who gave Himself for you and consecrate your life to His service? Is it too much we are asking you to do? Christ's service is not hard. His "yoke is easy and His burden is light." It is a delightful service.

Some of us have spent upwards of 30 and 40 years of our life in this service,—occupying sometimes the humblest places in it, and our sincere testimony, at the end of these periods, is that it is the noblest work a Christian can do. No other work can be compared to it. It has its reward even in this world. It affords an opportunity of giving up self and enjoying the sweetness of living for others—of promoting His honor, glory who has purchased us with His own blood, whose we are and whose we shall

ever be. The work is bound to succeed, as Christ is at the head of it, and God will reward it at the last day. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" Dan. xii, 3.

May God put it into your hearts to give a hearty response to this call and send you forth to labor in His vineyard.

In behalf of, and by the order of the Mission

{ K. C. Chatterjee
E. M. Wherry
O. S. Grant Jones.

May 30th 1900.

Current Thought and Incident.

CUSTOM OR CONSCIENCE OUR GUIDE?

"Custom does often reason our rule,

And only serves as reason to the fool."

"We must walk according to custom," is a very common Indian saying. "Custom," says Pundit Vidyasagar, "is the supreme ruler in this country."

No doubt order and regularity are very important. If the sun did not walk according to custom; if it rose sometimes in the north, sometimes in the south, or if it returned after going half way across the heavens, what dreadful confusion and misery would be the result! Imagine too what terror would fill our hearts if animals were to change their nature and cease to observe their accustomed habits! Suppose the bullocks of a man ploughing his field should turn into a kind of tiger, or the snake, forgetting its fear of man, should seek to enter our houses and coil about our limbs! It may be said, Is it not thus evident that all things must walk according to custom? Certainly all these things must observe their accustomed order; but let us look at another set of examples.

Formerly in this country there were very few roads and no railways. Every body had to find his way on foot through the jungle, where many a man got lost. Now if Indians strictly adhered to the rule of walking according to custom, they would not travel on the roads or railways made by the British Government; but would still take the jungle path, with all its dangers and delays. Certainly for Hindus to travel by railway is not walking according to the custom of their ancestors.

Take another case. The son of a poor man, whose father and grandfather had lived by daily work and a little fruit in their small garden, one day when digging in his field found a hoard of money. Taking it up carefully and showing them his wealth, he said, "Now we shall all be rich and happy; let us buy a large estate and have trees and fields in abundance." "Flush, silly boy," said they, "Thou knowest not the wisdom of the ancients. We must walk according to custom, and our custom has been to be always poor, working for our daily bread, and servants to others. Give over the money to the Zemindar, whose custom has been to have lands and servants." What would you think of this advice? When we look at these two examples, it would seem lawful at least to depart from the rule of custom, and much wiser to adopt a different course.

Take a third case. Small-pox used in England to disfigure, blind or cut off by death nearly a fourth of the people. About a century ago vaccination was discovered,

and now, when it is properly performed, very few take the disease and scarcely any die. In India small-pox was as bad. There is a proverb that a mother could never say she had a son till he had small-pox. Should the people of this country say: "It is not our custom to have our children vaccinated, and we must not depart from the ways of our ancestors?" If they lost children by small-pox, would they not be in some degree the cause of their death? It would be little comfort for them to say, "We walked according to custom."

Once more, there was a class of people in India, called Thugs. They went about in disguise, and pretended to be going in company for the sake of safety. A poor traveller returning home to his family with a little money which he had gained by hard labour, falls in with these people, and as he thinks them honest, joins the company. The Thugs, invoking Kālī, watch their opportunity, and as they walk along in pleasant conversation, slip a handkerchief over the poor man's head, strangle him, strip him of all his property, bury him, and pass on. Some of these men had been Thugs for twenty generations. They walked according to custom, and no doubt they justified their crime by this rule. But you can tell whether their treacherous murderous act was right or wrong.

What we are to learn from the foreign examples with reference to the rule which maintains that "We must walk according to custom?"

First, we learn that the works of Nature, such as the sun, and animals devoid of reason, as cattle, must always observe fixed laws belonging to their nature. Much harm would follow if they acted otherwise. Secondly, we learn that men may often depart with great advantage from the customs of their ancestors, and that sometimes it is even a positive duty to do so. Consider the difference between them. The sun cannot think; animals, though they think a little cannot reason from experience, so as to be able to judge whether this or that course be right or good; but men can read history, reflect and judge from experience, and thus are greatly assisted in the guidance of human affairs. Is it right that a man should set aside his reason, which was given him for the very purpose of judging for himself, and take up the rule suited only for planets and animals, of walking according to custom, without thinking whether the custom be right or wrong, good or bad? Surely such a man, in exchange for the reason which he throws aside, ought to be furnished with an extra pair of legs, a couple of horns, and a long tail!

If we simply "walk according to custom," there cannot be any improvement. Things must remain the same. Bad customs will be retained, and no new good ones will be acquired.

Two thousand years ago England was inhabited by a few painted savage tribes, who lived on wild fruits, and by hunting and fishing. If the people had walked according to custom, England would still have been in the same condition; but they wisely adopted improvements from other nations, using their reason, and the English are now among the richest and most enlightened nations of the world.

Some may ask in astonishment whether it is proposed to abandon the wisdom of our forefathers altogether, and do the very contrary to what they did, because the rule of walking according to custom is not reasonable? The reply to it is this that it is not necessarily wrong to follow custom. If a custom be wise and good, it is right to follow it—nay, it may be our bounden duty. What is urged is, that as every man is endowed with reason and a conscience, he is not blindly to follow custom, but to examine the merits of the custom and judge whether it is such as should

be followed by those who wish to please God and do good to themselves and their neighbours. A man will not set out on a journey without inquiring for the right; a man will contract a marriage for his son or daughter without ascertaining whether the match is likely to prove a happy union; a fool will lend his money without asking about the security.

What is old is not necessarily good: it may be rotten. An old house or an old bridge has sometimes been the death of some who trusted in it.

Hindus call this the Kali Yug, when wickedness abounds. Such being the case, if we "walk according to custom, we shall commit many sins.

Some Indian customs are good and should be maintained. Hindus have long been noted for their politeness, their kindness to their relations, and, except among certain classes, for their temperance. In these respects they should "walk according to custom." There are, however, other customs which should not be followed. Money should not be squandered at marriages, women should not be allowed to grow up uneducated. Ignorant and bigoted caste leaders should not be the guides of conduct.

It may be asked, What, then, is the rule by which our conduct is to be regulated? By a sense of Duty or a regard to what is right in itself. This corresponds with the law of God and the will of God. By obedience to it in every respect we become like Him and His approval will be our richest reward.

Conscience is the voice within us which pronounces our actions as right and wrong. Men, however, are very apt to mistake what conscience says, are to confound it with their own evil inclinations. Conscience can be called the voice of God only when duly enlightened. It must also be exercised. He who before every action deliberately asks himself, Is this right or wrong? will seldom mistake what is his duty. On the other hand, if men go on doing right or wrong, as it happens, they will at last care but little whether they do the one or the other.

Our stay in this world is short and uncertain. At death we must stand before God to give an account of our thoughts, words, and actions. The question will not be, whether we walked according to custom, but whether we obeyed God's laws. He is our Father in heaven: the Fountain of wisdom. We should ask Him to lead us into all truth, and enable us to make conscience, not custom, our guide. The rule of duty is best shown in the New Testament, which should be carefully read, and the example of Jesus Christ should be especially studied.

Short Papers.

OCCUPATION AND LONGEVITY.

Dr. Arlidge, an English physician, has recently published the results of years of close study of longevity, quoted in the Chicago Tribune, and conclusions are instructive and valuable. Dr. Arlidge has decided that the indolent rich are the shortest lived of all classes, and gives as the cause of this seeming anomaly that they worry their lives away. The farmer stands at the head of the list of long lives; he generally has to toil hard, but his work is in the open air, and in an altogether healthy environment. Good digestion with him waits upon appetite, and he eats heartily of wholesome food, which nourishes his frame and makes good red blood.

Next in order of longevity are the clerical, legal and medical professions. The clergyman in the country leads a life somewhat closely resembling that of the farmer; he is

much out of doors, his hours are necessarily regular, and he is precluded by the nature of his calling from dissipated habits of a worldly sort. The lawyer's lines, so far as health is concerned, are not cast in such pleasant places. His life is a more strenuous one, generally full of excitement, with the brain kept for most of the time at high pressure, and the nerves on the strain. Of the three learned professions, the physician can calculate on the shortest life. A conscientious doctor must of necessity be the most self-abnegating of men; and, as a rule, he has little or no time to think of himself, as his mind is continually burdened with the responsibilities of his practice. In both town and country the medical man is compelled perforce to live under unnatural conditions; he is out in all weathers and at all times; and it may be truly said that a busy physician can hardly call an hour his own. Then he is constantly exposed to infection, and a large part of his life is spent in the depressing and devitalizing atmosphere of the sick room.

Politics, according to Dr. Arlidge, is one of the most healthy of occupations. This fact has been proved time and again—Gladstone, Beaconsfield, Bismarck and Theirs are conspicuous examples of the truth of this statement. Great brain workers are notoriously long lived, and among literary men, scientists, professors and teachers, the mortality is far lower than among the industrial classes. Therefore, Dr. Arlidge holds that activity of the mind, if bent in the right direction, has more to do with the health of the body than muscular exertion, but he thinks that a judicious combination of both forms of exercise brings about the ideal condition.

Employers of labor are especially subject to heart affections. Nervous complaints come second, apoplexy third, and consumption fourth. The commercial traveler is a man who seldom reaches the allotted term of years. Irregular habits, too much drinking and smoking, and poorly cooked food are the factors that tend to bring his existence to an untimely end. Policemen are, as a class, very healthy and live to an advanced age, due to the fact that they are chosen for their soundness, and that their life is largely spent in the open air. Rheumatism is the

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affection with which the policeman is chiefly troubled. The mail carrier is healthy on account of his out door life, but for the same reason is peculiarly subject to rheumatism. The miner, notwithstanding that for eight hours of the twenty-four he is working cramped in a coal pit, shut out from the sun and in an atmosphere thickly impregnated with coal dust, is, contrary to preconceived notions, a healthy man and usually lives to a green old age.—Medical Review.

MR. SANKEY'S AFFLICTION.

No announcement of Mr. Ira D. Sankey's illness has been made before for the reason that it was his expressed wish that his friends should be kept in ignorance as to his real condition lest they should become unnecessarily alarmed. However, to avoid any misrepresentation or exaggeration that might result from the facts in the case not being known, his family submit the following statement by Dr. Kalish, his attending oculist: "Mr. Sankey first came under my care about two months ago, suffering from an attack of congestive glaucoma, caused undoubtedly in this case by physical exhaustion from overwork. This disease is due to an increase in the tension of the eyeball, which, if not reduced, causes wasting of the optic nerve and abolition of sight. The operation necessary to reduce this pressure was performed as soon as the condition of the eyes permitted. He rallied at once, the pain and suffering being relieved, but it is now too soon to express a definite opinion as to the result of the operation. In the right eye the existing conditions are not unfavorable to the recovery of a moderate amount of sight which will probably be accentuated by improvement in his general health. The left eye has not responded to treatment as the other eye has done, and at this time any anticipation that sight in this eye will be restored is hardly justifiable.

The many friends of this evangelistic singer will sympathize with him in his affliction and will hope and pray that he may be fully restored to health and to eyesight.

MISSIONARY HEALTH ECONOMICS.

FROM REV. C. C. THAYER.

We require about sixty hogsheds of air daily. Carbonic oxide, the residue of smoke of the combustion, escapes at the rate of about eight ounces per hour, and nearly twice as much at 32° Fahr. as to 100. Some people are afraid of moving air lest they get cold, so they subject themselves to poor air, and which has, perhaps, been several times through the lungs of others, laden with its deadly freight. Attention should be paid to both the quality and quantity of the air we inhale for the support of vital force.

The production and conservation of vital force is favoured by sleep. Some people demand more sleep than others, but in every case the nervous system must be satisfied in repose. If a muscle is not rested it perishes. So a nerve. A cell cannot repair, without repose, and decay follows; nervous prostration, mental depression, mania, etc. Excessive activity produces excessive disintegration, as is seen in excessive deposits in the urine of alkaline phosphates-wasted nerve tissue. Nothing is surer

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that; when the outgo is more than the income, bankruptcy follows. Sleep is nature's sweet restorer; let us not, at our peril, hinder its repose or repair. A rigid adherence to a fixed hour for retiring, a glass of hot water or milk at bedtime, or a pleasant walk to get a little weary and a quiet evening before retiring, favor sleep.

Missionary economics thus includes the utilizing of resources without waste. Are we using our vital energy with frugality, so as to perpetuate both the instrument and the service, or are we ruinously pushing both, spiking our guns, and allowing the zeal of missions to eat us up, thus defeating God's purpose in our service? Do not missionaries too often start out on a bankrupt policy, ready to die for the cause? What means this cry coming up to God from mission fields, of nervous prostration, mental depression, and physical bankruptcy, but guilty testimony to this bankrupt policy? not so intended, of course; it is simply neglect of missionary economics. "So much to do. Why, I am doing three persons' work!" Did God so order? Sometimes we see things that do not exist. Does God put on us any burden heavier than we can bear, knowing that the policy defeats His purpose? Nothing could seem more impolite or improbable. Duty must be commensurate with ability. Whatever the need of a perishing world may be, my responsibility must be measured by the limitations, and when I go beyond, am I not doing wrong? "Too much to do" is Satan's snare to disable God's consecrated servants. Satan may well dread an economical, level-headed missionary, who cannot be tempted to destroy himself with the "so much to do," but who by self-preservation is able to hold up before Satan's deluded ones the inviting cross of the blessed Lord for twenty, or thirty, or fifty years. What a failure! How many, many precious, consecrated servants have fallen by the way from neglecting their daily supplies. The man is more than his business. The missionary is more than his mission. "If any man destroy his temple, him will God destroy." — *The Missionary Review of the world.*

It is true that love cannot be forced, that it cannot be made to order, that we cannot love because we ought or even because we want. But we can bring ourselves into the presence of the lovable. We can enter into Friendship through the door of Discipleship. We can learn love through service.—Hugh Black.

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FOREIGN TELEGRAMS.

London, June 5.

It is officially announced that Their Majesties the King and Queen arrive in Ireland on 21st July.

FRENCH ASSURANCES TO THE POWERS.

London, June 5.

For the purpose of disarming the suspicion which any military movement in Morocco is calculated to excite, the French Government has carefully assured Britain and other Governments interested, that the forthcoming expedition against Figuig is in consequence of the attack made on M. Jounart's party, and is merely punitive, and no occupation is intended.

Figuig is the centre of an oasis near the French Algerian frontier. The town is formidably fortified and is a meeting place of all sorts of unruly marauding, fanatical tribesmen. They will doubtless receive smart punishment as soon as the French preparations are completed.

SATISFACTORY OUTLOOK.

London, June 5.

The Governor in opening the Cape Parliament, said that reports everywhere in the Colony were remarkable, indicating that all races are settling down. He earnestly trusted that Parliament would ratify the convention establishing the Customs Union in South Africa, which would be a long stride towards federation.

FOUR VESSELS LOST.

London, June 5.

A hurricane has taken place in the Philippines, in which four American steamers, including the transport *Samshui*, were lost. The loss of life is not yet known.

ROYALTY AT THE SUNDAY SERVICE.

London, June 7.

The King and Queen, and Prince and Princess of Wales, and other Royalties attended the hospital Sunday service at St. Paul's Cathedral this afternoon. All wore mourning dress. The congregation was a huge one.

The visit has undoubtedly given an exceptional impetus to collections.

Calcutta, June 7.

London, June 6.—Lord Salisbury has been seized with illness at Hatfield. His family have been summoned.—*Englishman Special*.

DISAPPROVAL BY THE OPPOSITION LEADER.

London, June 6.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, speaking at Perth, condemned Mr. Chamberlain's proposals as wanton and premature. "We have tested," he said, "free trade for fifty years, and every day has evoked fresh testimony to its blessings. Let the Government take heed lest in their recklessness they set the Empire ablaze and reduce its prosperity to ashes."

NEW ZEALAND PREMIER'S WARNING.

Mr. Seddon declares that the New Zealand Parliament at the end of June will be asked to ratify the Imperial Conference tariff Canadian lines. If the Motherland scents the proposals, reciprocity between the Colonies and foreign countries will follow.—*Indian Daily News Special*.

THE STRANDED STEAMER.

London, June 6.

The Steamer *Deutschland*, which went ashore near New York, has been floated.

London, June 7.

The forest fires in Canada and New England continue, and are particularly alarming in the Canadian maritime provinces around Ottawa and Montreal. The people in the lumbering villages are seeking refuge in milldams.

The Archbishop of Montreal has ordered prayer to be offered,

LORD MILNER ON ASIATICS.

London, June 6.

Replying to an anti-Asiatic deputation, Lord Milner insisted upon the exemption of superior classes of Asiatics from restrictions. He did not desire that Asiatics should take the bread from whites, but recommended their temporary employment in mines and public works.

THE UNITED STATES SQUADRON.

London, June 6.

The assembling in Chinese waters of the American squadron under Rear-Admiral Evans is regarded in official circles at Washington as significant.

COLLISION OF STEAMERS.

London, June 7.

The steamers *Insular* and *Liban*, belonging to the Transoceanic Line, collided this afternoon off Marseilles. The *Liban* sank. Twenty-nine corpses have so far been recovered.

OVERTURES REJECTED.

Allahabad, June 7.

The Amir of Kabul, it is said, lately embarked on overtures to Gholam Hyder Khan of Goudamuk, who is one of the party of exiles with Ishak Khan at Samarkand, to induce him to return to Afghanistan. Gholam Hyder Khan, however, has vouchsafed no reply; and the Amir, finding his offers neglected, has ordered that all his relations—an influential family living in Goudamuk—be expelled the country.

REPORTED BRITISH PRISONERS.

London, June 8.

The Commander of the Abyssinian column has learned that there are several English prisoners in the Mullah's camp, stated to be wounded officers from Colonel Plunkett's column.

London, June 8.

The French artillery bombarded Fignig for two hours. The troops surprised and occupied two crests without casualty. The effects of the bombardment are not known.

NO FRANCHISE FOR ASIATICS AND ALIENS.

London, June 8.

The Government amendment to the Municipal Ordinance granting municipal franchise to educated and socially qualified coloured persons in the Transvaal confines the franchise to British whites and excludes coloured people and aliens.

GREAT LOSS OF LIFE.

London, June 8.

Later accounts of the collision off Marseilles state that there were 200 to 250 people on board the *Liban*, of whom half are believed to have perished. The *Liban* sank in twenty minutes after being struck.

PANIC AMONGST THE PASSENGERS.

The passengers, who were at lunch at the time, were seized with a panic and endeavoured to seize the boats, only one of which was lowered. Many were picked up by boats from steamers which were in the vicinity.

THE CAPTAINS TO BLAME.

The collision off Marseilles occurred in bright sunshine and a calm sea, and was apparently due to each Captain persisting in his course, expecting the other to deviate.

The *Liban* had just left Marseilles bound for Leghorn, and the *Insular* was from Toulon and entering Marseilles.

The loss of life is entirely uncertain.

London, June 8.

The bacteriologist referred to in yesterday's message has died at Berlin.

The death of the bacteriologist at Berlin is officially certified to be from plague.

London, June 8.

It is estimated that the floods in America have rendered 25,000 persons homeless, and submerged 200,000 acres of fertile farms.

Martial law has been proclaimed at St. Louis to prevent looting.

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